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משרד הממשלה

משרד

מס' לוי

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כתובת:

אנחנו דורו הראשון החלוצים של יהודי זרץ ישראל
 וגם מצבנו אינו פשוט, ופזנים אמר אהב נא
 אנו רגלי העבודה הפנימית והעבודה אשר יחד
 אנו דא אנוק ההיסטוריה ה זה מקור
 המצוינה היהודית שאלה במחשבה הודעה
 המאמרו . מלי ארץ העלם מלי והוא

THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND PALESTINE

STATEMENT

MADE BEFORE

The Palestine Royal Commission

IN JERUSALEM, ON NOVEMBER 25TH, 1936.

By DR. CHAIM WEIZMANN

PRESIDENT OF THE ZIONIST ORGANISATION AND OF THE
JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE

SECOND EDITION

1939

Issued by the Zionist Organisation, London

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FOREWORD.

The statement here reprinted dates back to November, 1936. In the period of little more than two years which has since elapsed, the Jewish position has in several countries shown further rapid deterioration. No one, for instance, would now describe Italy as a country in which Jews were in a "fairly comfortable position"—to-day Italy has followed in the footsteps of Nazi Germany, and is adding her quota to the refugee problem. Austria and the Sudetenland have become part of the Greater Germany, with all that that means for their Jewish inhabitants. Czechoslovakia, too, has been drawn into the German orbit, and the shadow of Nazi methods and Nazi intolerance has been cast, in greater or less degree, over most of the States of Eastern Europe.

While the situation of the Jews in the various countries of Central and Eastern Europe has in fact become catastrophic, Palestine in the past three years has been the scene of continued disturbances. But Jewish work there has stood the test; the economic structure remains unshaken; and the enthusiasm of the Jews of the Diaspora for a return to their homeland shows no diminution. The Jewish population of Palestine has shown that it is fully capable of defending itself against the attacks launched upon it—and that without descending to the level of its terrorist aggressors. Even now constructive work continues, as witness the establishment in the course of the past three years of nearly forty new settlements, many of them in exposed areas, and on land which has lain derelict for centuries.

It is small wonder that the magnitude of the refugee problem created by the persecution of the Jews in Europe has produced a crop of so-called "territorial" projects—plans for the large-scale settlement of Jews in British Guiana, Alaska, Tanganyika, and other undeveloped countries. Reference is made to these projects in a letter to *The Times* which appears as an appendix to this pamphlet. They serve merely to distract attention from the one country which can offer both immediate help and the prospect of permanent settlement; the country, moreover, in which the Jewish people possess rights internationally acknowledged and sanctified by centuries of faith; which has been prepared for large-scale settlement of Jews by sixty years of pioneer work.

To-day the fate of the refugees and the fate of Palestine hang in the balance. They are two aspects of the same picture, and it is in the hope of drawing attention to the proper role of Palestine in the solution of the Jewish problem that it has been decided, even after the lapse of two years, to reprint the statement which follows.

CH.W.

London, 31.1.39.

On Wednesday, November 25th, 1936, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the Zionist Organisation and of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, opened the case for the Jewish Agency before the Palestine Royal Commission appointed by the British Government, in August 1936, and consisting of Earl Peel, Sir Horace George Montagu Rumbold, Sir Egbert Laurie Lucas Hammond, Sir William Morris Carter, Sir Harold Morris, and Professor Reginald Coupland.

Dr. Weizmann briefly described the formal status and the structure of the Jewish Agency and then addressed the Commission as follows:

I think it may be convenient if I attempt to indicate briefly the background of the Movement which I have the honour to represent before you to-day. Perhaps, just as the Commission thought it necessary to take a bird's-eye view of the country to see the physical background of the work which is going on here, so I may be permitted—and I shall try not to abuse your kindness and your permission—to try to picture the moral background of the forces behind the Zionist Movement.

Above all, I should like to put briefly before you the Jewish problem as it presents itself to us to-day. It is a two-fold problem; but its nature can perhaps be expressed in one word: it is the problem of the homelessness of a people. Speaking of homelessness, I should like at once to state that individual Jews, and individual groups of Jews, may have homes and sometimes very comfortable homes. Indeed, if one thinks of the small communities in the west of Europe beginning with England and continuing further down to the South—France, Switzerland, Italy,* Belgium, and Holland—these Jewish communities are, as compared to the Jews in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, in a fairly comfortable position. Then again, the position of the great Jewish community further west in America is, economically, and to a certain extent politically and morally such that Jews there are free to work and labour without let or hindrance. But if one draws a line and takes the Rhine as the geographical boundary, almost everything to the east of the Rhine is to-day in a position, politically and economically, which may be described—and I am not given, I think, to exaggeration—as something that is neither life nor death, and one may add that if Europe to-day were in the same state as it was in 1914 before the War, with the highways and byways of Europe and the world in general open, then we should have witnessed an emigration of Jews that would probably have dwarfed the pre-war emigration,—and the pre-war emigration was not by any means

*In December 1936 Italy had not yet imitated Germany's policy of "aryanisation."

small. I think that in the year 1914 alone there emigrated out of Russia, which then included Poland as well, something in the neighbourhood of 120,000 Jews.

They went in the majority of cases to America, where they could readily be absorbed in a highly developed industrial country. The emigrant found his livelihood almost immediately on arrival. This, as Your Lordship and the members of the Commission are well aware, cannot happen to-day. The world is closed; and we have recently heard it said in authoritative quarters in Geneva, in Poland, and in England, that there are a million Jews too many in Poland. This is not the place to enter into a discussion as to why exactly a million *Jews*? They are citizens of Poland; their fate and their destinies have been bound up with the fate and destinies of Poland for well-nigh a thousand years. They passed through all the vicissitudes of the Polish nation. They desire to make their contribution, good, bad or indifferent,—like everybody else—to Polish development. Why should they be singled out as being a million too many? No doubt these elementary facts as to the state of the world to-day are known in Poland just as they are known to every intelligent newspaper reader here. What does it mean? Where can they go? Is there any place in the world which can rapidly absorb a million people, whoever they may be, Jews or non-Jews? The poor Polish peasant, perhaps ignorant and not very subtle, when he hears people in authority making a pronouncement like that, may possibly interpret it as meaning: here is a superfluous people standing in my way, which must be got rid of somehow.

I do not want to press the point any further. I shall not waste the time of the Commission by describing in any way what is happening in Germany. It is too well known to need elaboration. This accounts for the position of something like 3,600,000 Jews. Poland has slightly over three millions; Germany had in 1932 or 1933 something like 600,000, but that number has since diminished. If one goes further afield, and takes the Jewries of Roumania, Latvia, Austria, one sees practically the same picture, and it is no exaggeration on my part to say that today almost six million Jews—I am not speaking of the Jews in Persia and Morocco and such places, who are very inarticulate, and of whom one hears very little—there are in this part of the world six million people pent up in places where they are not wanted, and for whom the world is divided into places where they cannot live, and places into which they may not enter.

I shall say a word here about Russia. In Russia there are about

three million Jews. We have very little contact with them. Russia is a closed country at present. The situation has, I think, materially improved because many who could not be integrated into the present structure of Russia are in process of disappearing. They all seem to have gone or to be about to go. The old Jewish communities of Russia with their tradition—it was a venerable tradition, a tradition of culture and learning, a religious tradition—are destroyed. The younger generation are spread and scattered among the 170,000,000 Russians, and are gradually being integrated into the new social structure which has been created or is about to be created. But in the sense in which we understand Judaism, it is disappearing in Russia.

Zionism is not allowed in Russia. It is considered a counter-revolutionary movement and the handmaid of British Imperialism. From time to time people filter out of Russia,—the younger people—and perhaps you may have an opportunity of seeing a few groups of these Russian young men and women, who have come out of Russia at great sacrifice and great risk to their lives; but there is no regular emigration of Jews from Russia into Palestine. We have had a considerable amount of trouble in getting out something like a thousand or twelve hundred Zionist families who had been arrested and were in Siberian prisons. We are gradually trying, in the face of considerable difficulty, to get them out to Palestine, but to all intents and purposes Russian Jewry is non-existent as a member of World Jewry. There is however no official anti-Semitism in Russia; anti-Semitism in Russia is a crime against the State. But we know too little generally to be able to give a considered opinion about it. But leaving the conditions in Russia aside, I think the brief description I have given of the position of the Jews in the rest of the world, with the exception of the western communities, is substantially correct, and if I may say so with respect, errs on the side of understatement.

Now we think this is not merely a problem which concerns the Jewish community. It is in our view a world problem of considerable importance. Naturally it is one which affects primarily the Jewish community, and secondarily the state of affairs in that particular part of the world, a part of the world which since the War has moved towards new forms of political and social life, and which is not yet very strong or very mature either politically or economically. These six million people to whom I have referred are condemned to live from hand to mouth, they do not know to-day what is going to happen to-morrow. I am not speaking now of organised

anti-Semitism; even assuming the host-nations were quite friendly, there would still be purely objective reasons in those parts of the world, which would tend to grind down the Jewish community and make it into the flotsam and jetsam of the world—grind it into economic dust, so to speak.

Far be it from me, in saying that, to try to harrow your feelings, but it is too little known. Though it is generally known that the position of the Jewish people is not very happy, I think the depth of its misery is too little appreciated; and that is why I have permitted myself to dwell on it at some length. After all, it affects the fate of six million people. I am thinking of the young people and leaving aside for the moment the old people. I compare the fate of these young men and women—I myself come from the same social stratum—with the fate, the not very enviable fate, of young men and women in, say, the depressed areas of England. There are quite a number of young men and women in England whose state, whose feelings, are not very happy; young men who know that they are superfluous, that they cannot find employment, that the ordinary elementary right of the human being to work, and to live by the work of his hands and his brain, is refused them. It is tragic enough, but at least a man may feel, in Durham or Newcastle, at any rate, that there is a State that takes care of him as far as it can. There is a hope. There may be an opportunity. Unemployment is going down, his turn may come, and a man can put up with a good deal of suffering if he sees a hope in front of him. That is not applicable to the masses, the hundreds, the thousands, and the millions of young men and women in the areas of Central and Eastern Europe. They cannot go out, they cannot find employment, they are not surrounded by a friendly atmosphere, there is nobody who is concerned for them. They are doomed, they are exasperated, they are in despair.

Since my early youth, My Lord, I have fought destructive tendencies in Jewry,—but it is almost impossible to avoid destructive tendencies amongst a younger generation which lives in the state I have described, unless some hope is given to the young people that one day, some day in some distant future, one in five, one in ten, one in twenty, will find a refuge somewhere where he can work, where he can live, and where he can straighten himself up and look with open eyes at the world and at his fellow-men and women. It is no wonder that a certificate for Palestine is considered the highest boon in this part of the world. One in twenty, one in thirty, may get it, and for them it is redemption; it is tanta-

mount to freedom, the opportunity to live and work, and that is why they watch with such intensity all that is going on here, and whether or not the doors of Palestine will remain open or will remain closed.

I believe I have said enough; it would require special treatment, detailed statistical treatment, to explain why this state of affairs has come about, but perhaps I may give you one or two illustrations. Let us take Poland. When Poland formed part of the Russian Empire, it was the western part of the Russian Empire, the more industrialised part; it was, so to say, the bridge between the vast domain of Russia, which is a semi-eastern country, and the west of Europe. Jews lived on this bridge and were engaged mainly in trade, commerce and industry,—particularly small industries. There were thousands of them, and I think I am not exaggerating when I say there were at least 100,000 families in the big centres, in Warsaw, Lodz and Lublin, living by industry which was, measured by western European standards, a somewhat primitive industry, but which by Russian standards of that time, was a necessity. The needle trade and the needle industry was in Jewish hands. Some textile industries, both large and small, were a Jewish occupation, and there were many others. I am not an industrial expert, but from what I saw in my younger days, and from what one reads, those industries occupied at least 100,000 families, if not more. The market for their production, which was cheap—sometimes it was sweated industry, irrational by European standards—the market for this industry, was the vast domain of Russia. The Jewish manufacturer or quasi-manufacturer traded his goods as far as the Caucasus and as far as the Chinese Wall, the whole of Siberia was open to him. It was not a very lucrative market, but still it enabled him to live. With the advent of the War and tariff-walls, and with the formation of Soviet Russia, this market disappeared almost overnight, and this industry which had been turned eastwards could not turn itself westwards because to the west lay Germany, and this comparatively weak industry could not compete in the German market; so these people were thrown out of gear, out of employment. Another factor is that, with the formation of a national Polish State, a Polish middle-class is gradually developing and gaining consciousness. Moreover, in view of the state of agriculture in Poland, the Polish peasantry are migrating in large numbers to the towns, and the function formerly discharged by the Jews in this part of the world is now being taken over by Poles encouraged by the State, which itself

monopolises important branches of trade—e.g., the liquor trade, the timber trade, and the grain trade.

Gradually, and I can prove it by statistical data, the Jews are being displaced, and that is the inner meaning of the statement that there are one million Jews too many in Poland. They are too many because their place is gradually being taken by the Poles. The same process, on perhaps a smaller scale, is being repeated in other countries, in the Succession States which sprang up after the War. Such, My Lord and Gentlemen, is the state of a great part of Jewry in that part of the world.

I could turn to the West and say that, if there is no material problem or economic problem of such acuteness as I have described in the East, there is an uncomfortable feeling in the West, with a few exceptions—it is easy to be a Jew in England—but that uneasy feeling which used to stop at the Vistula has now reached the Rhine and gradually crossed the Rhine. It infiltrates across the Channel and across the Atlantic. It has not become so acute as to make our life unbearable, but it is there, and what has happened in Germany is the Writing on the Wall even for the Western communities.

The German tragedy, My Lord, is in size much smaller than the Polish; it is of manageable proportions, and, moreover, the German Jews are economically stronger; they can resist the onslaught much better than the Polish Jews, who have been ground down now for almost a century, first in Russia and now in Poland. But the drama of the German situation is that here was a Western community in a civilized State, to all intents and purposes an integral part of the life of Germany, playing a very considerable part economically and intellectually, an old community—the communities on the Rhine are much older than the Prussian communities. I shall not dwell here on the contribution which German Jewry has made to modern Germany—I could quote a galaxy of names of international fame and repute—and in one day, almost overnight, it has been destroyed. First came the destruction of the intellectuals, then the destruction of the merchant class, and so on and so forth, and Hitler and his satellites are saying they will not rest until the German Jewish community is reduced to beggary. It came upon us overnight and naturally it is a warning.

I hope this warning will never be realised. It is a warning even to the Western communities and one sees from time to time that the German attitude has its imitators, in France, and even in England and America. And so uneasiness has spread throughout Jewry—justifiable uneasiness. I hope it will end there. Very

often we say to ourselves, "But it can never happen in England; it can never happen in France." Yet only recently, on the appointment of M. Blum in France, I walked through the streets of Paris and I heard the familiar cry, "Down with the Jews!" "Mort aux Juifs!" It may be only talk, but it is not pleasant. It makes one uneasy. It makes one uneasy to feel that one is always the subject of analysis, that one is being dissected and tested: Have we the right to live? May I in all humility quote a small incident from my own experience? I have lived in England for thirty years. When the stupid accident happened to his Majesty the King—when somebody threw a revolver in the direction of the King (for six hours the name of the man was not revealed by the press) the first reaction of every friend I met was, "For God's sake, let's hope it was not a Jew!" Now that is typical, it is characteristic of the nervousness there is. No Englishman knew or cared whether the man's name was Smith or Jones or Brown, but we could not afford to have even a madman commit such act, because if he did his act would be charged against all of us, and we would be looked upon as responsible for it.

I could go on dwelling on the tense position in Jewry to-day aggravated, as it naturally has been, by the effects of the Great War. This is the moral side of the problem. In all countries we try to do our best, but somehow in many countries we are not entirely accepted as an integral part of the communities to which we belong. This feeling is one of the causes which have prompted Jews throughout the ages, and particularly in the last hundred years, to try to make a contribution towards the solution of the problem and to normalise—to some extent to normalise—the position of the Jews in the world. We are sufficiently strong, My Lord, to have preserved our identity, but an identity which is *sui generis* and not like the identity of other nations. When one speaks of the English or the French or the German nation, one refers to a definite State, a definite organisation, a language, a literature, a history, a common destiny; but it is clear that when one speaks of the Jewish people, one speaks of a people which is a minority everywhere, a majority nowhere, which is to some extent identified with the races among which it lives, but still not quite identical. It is, if I may say so, a disembodied ghost of a race, without a body, and it therefore inspires suspicion, and suspicion breeds hatred. There should be one place in the world, in God's wide world, where we could live and express ourselves in accordance with our character, and make our contribution towards the civilized

world, in our own way and through our own channels. Perhaps if we had, we would be better understood in ourselves, and our relation to other races and nations would become more normal. We would not have to be always on the defensive or, on the contrary, become too aggressive, as always happens with a minority forced to be constantly on the defensive. I hope I may be forgiven if I have dwelt too long on this problem, but I feel it is essential that I should make it as clear as I possibly can.

What has produced this particular mentality of the Jews which makes me describe the Jewish race as a sort of disembodied ghost—an entity and yet not an entity in accordance with the usual standards which are applied to define an entity? I believe the main cause which has produced the particular state of Jewry in the world is its attachment to Palestine. We are a stiff-necked people and a people of long memory. We never forget. Whether it is our misfortune or whether it is our good fortune, we have never forgotten Palestine, and this steadfastness, which has preserved the Jew throughout the ages and throughout a career that is almost one long chain of inhuman suffering, is primarily due to some physiological or psychological attachment to Palestine. We have never forgotten it nor given it up. We have survived our Babylonian and Roman conquerors. The Jews put up a fairly severe fight and the Roman Empire, which digested half of the civilized world, did not digest small Judea. And whenever they once got a chance, the slightest chance, there the Jews returned, there they created their literature, their villages, towns, and communities. And, if the Commission would take the trouble to study the post-Roman period of the Jews and the life of the Jews in Palestine, they would find that during the nineteen centuries which have passed since the destruction of Palestine as a Jewish political entity, there was not a single century in which the Jews did not attempt to come back.

It is, I believe, a fallacy to regard those 1,900 years as, so to say, a desert of time; they were not. When the material props of the Jewish commonwealth were destroyed, the Jews carried Palestine in their hearts and in their heads wherever they went. That idea continued to express itself in their ritual and in their prayers. In the East End of London the Jew still prays for dew in the summer and for rain in the winter, and his seasons and festivals are all Palestinian seasons and Palestinian festivals. When Rome destroyed their country, the intellectual leader of the Jewish community came to the Roman commander and said, "You have destroyed all our material possessions; give us, I pray, some refuge

for our houses of learning." A refuge was found; the place still exists, it was then a big place, and is now a tiny railway station by the name of Yebna, in Hebrew "Yavneh." There were schools there, and there the Jews continued their intellectual output, so that those schools became, so to speak, the spiritual homes, not only of Palestinian Jewry, but of Jewry at large, which was gradually filtering out of Palestine and dispersing all over the world. They replaced the material Palestine, the political Palestine, by a moral Palestine which was indestructible, which remained indestructible; and this yearning found its expression in a mass of literature, sacred and non-sacred, secular and religious.

Later on, whenever the opportunity arose, there were also material movements, movements of masses of Jews into Palestine. When the Jews were driven out of Spain at the end of the fifteenth century they wandered all over the world. Two hundred thousand of them turned their faces towards the East. We are not unmindful of the reception given to us then by the Moslem world. We came to Turkey, and from Turkey we drifted to Palestine, and communities sprang up: the City of Tiberias, which was desert and laid waste, was rebuilt in that period by a Jew who became very influential at the Turkish court. He was given permission to rebuild the city of Tiberias. He rebuilt it and it became something like Tel Aviv to-day. It was subsequently, one hundred years later, laid waste by Arabs—much the same thing is happening now—and then again, one hundred years afterwards, it was rebuilt again by Jews. Four great Jewish communities were created: in Hebron, Jerusalem, Safad and Tiberias. They became great centres of Jewish learning, they grew from nothing to communities which sometimes contained as many as 20,000 inhabitants. The darkest period, the period when Jewish Palestine was, so to speak, at its lowest ebb, was after the Crusades and the Tartar invasion. But apart from those hundred or hundred and twenty years, there was never a time when Jews did not attempt, not only in prayer, not only in yearning, not only in moral and religious striving, but actually and physically, to go to Palestine.

Messianic movements which were semi-religious and semi-secular—a less rationalistic form of the modern Zionist Movement—sprang up. In the seventeenth century a Jew in Smyrna by the name of Shabbatai Zevi proclaimed himself the Messiah. He saw in a vision that he was destined to bring the Jews back to Palestine. And Jews in Holland, in England, and in Venice,—hard-headed business men, bankers and traders—gathered around this man,

and the non-Jewish world was so convinced that the time had come for the return of the Jews to Palestine under the leadership of Shabbatai Zevi that this formed the basis of Cromwell's invitation to the Jews to return to England. According to Jewish tradition, the Messiah will come on the day when the Dispersion is complete. There were then no Jews in England, and Cromwell invited the return of the Jews to England in order that the Dispersion should be complete, and the advent of the Messiah thus facilitated. I am not quoting these facts merely as a historical curiosity, but in order to point out that the idea of the Return to Zion still survived not only in the consciousness of the Jews, but also in the consciousness of a great part of the non-Jewish world, particularly of the English world, three hundred years before the Balfour Declaration. And throughout the three hundred years which preceded the Balfour Declaration, English people—statesmen, divines,—advocated the return of the Jews to Palestine (Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Palmerston, and many more). In the time of Palmerston this idea assumed the form of definite proposals, definite projects, which proved to be impracticable, and finally the British Government proclaimed (and instructed all its Consuls in the East accordingly) that the Jews in Palestine, from whatever country they might have come, were under the protection of Great Britain. If you have an opportunity of travelling through the southern Jewish villages, you will see one of the oldest of the settlements, Rishon-le-Zion, which is, if I may say so, one of the most interesting. When the settlers first tried to acquire that land—and the acquisition of land in the time of the Turks was even more of a science than it is now—they did it through the influence and the help of the British Vice-Consul at Jaffa.

I do not propose to overload the Commission with historical detail on the connection of Great Britain with the idea of the Return of the Jews to Palestine during the last three hundred years; but if at some time you would care to look through a brief summary prepared on the subject you will find that I have not overstated the case when I say that that connection was a real thing. It was a real thing; it was semi-religious, and it may be there were other reasons for it; but there it was, and it lived on in English minds and, therefore, I think the Balfour Declaration is nothing but the final link in the chain of attempts made by the British people to help us to come back to Palestine.

Before I close, I should like to mention two or three things which preceded the Balfour Declaration. When we first started our

work in 1897, at the first Zionist Congress, and Dr. Herzl, who was then the leader of the Movement, tried to negotiate with the Sultan for our return to Palestine, the Sultan, in the usual Turkish way, never said "Yes" and never said "No," and things were uncertain. But the Jewish position grew worse from day to day and finally, in 1903, there was a massacre in Kishinev which started a wave of pogroms that swept over the whole of Russia. The position of the Jews became desperate.

The hope of ever obtaining anything definite from the Turkish Government dwindled, and the leader of the Zionist Movement, who always hoped that some day England might help us with the Return, met Joseph Chamberlain. Joseph Chamberlain had then just returned from a tour to Africa, and he made an offer of a country which then was called Uganda (and is now part of Kenya) to the Jews. And so we found ourselves,—a Movement far from any practical realisation of its aspirations,—treated very seriously by the mightiest government in the world who made us a generous offer, an offer of a territory almost as big as the mandated territory of Palestine. I think the territory which was then discussed was something like 8,000 square miles, a plateau in Uganda—I have never been there, but as far as I know, good land. We had the rope round our necks; and yet, when this offer was brought to the Zionist Congress, a great discussion ensued and finally the offer was accepted in this form: that a Commission should be sent to the country in question to see what it was. But that was carried by a small majority; the minority, a very important minority, consisted primarily of Jews from Eastern Europe (I myself was amongst them), and they refused the offer for one reason only: "It is not Palestine, and it never will be Palestine." I remember we proposed that our leader should write a letter to the British Government and say something like this to the British Government: "We are extremely grateful for your generous offer, but we cannot accept it, just as we could not agree to cease to be Jews. Some day it may be given to you to make us another offer." We said, "We have waited two thousand years, and we shall wait a few more years; and in the fullness of time God will keep His promise to His people." Our Leader died, and the offer was refused. Twelve or thirteen years later, Mr. Balfour, who was Prime Minister in the Cabinet which had made the Uganda offer, gave us the Balfour Declaration.

Mr. Balfour, when I had the pleasure of making his acquaintance, tried to understand why we felt like this, and the only reason which appealed to him was when I told him: "It is not Jerusalem,

and it never will be." This tenacity, this steadfastness, is, My Lord and Gentlemen, perhaps our misfortune. If it had disappeared, there would be no Jewish problem. But here we are; it is our destiny.

The Balfour Declaration was issued by his Majesty's Government on the 2nd November, 1917. I have tried to explain the reasons which lay, so to speak, behind the Declaration: the position of the Jews in the world and their attachment to Palestine, of which I think British statesmen were very well aware at the time of the issue of the Declaration. It has sometimes glibly been said, 'Here is a document, somewhat vague in its nature, issued in time of war. It was a war-time expedient.' I have a much higher opinion of British statesmen than to attribute to them an act of that kind. It was a solemn act, a promise given to a people, an ancient people, which finds itself in the position which I have described. I know that British statesmen did not regard that promise as merely a trifling war-time expedient which might serve for a time, but which when the war was over and things had settled down, would lose its value. I do not think that. No British statesmen, however frivolous (and I have not seen many such) could have thought of it in that light. I remember having seen a document of the British Cabinet where a report on this particular act was briefly given, and the way it was described pointed to the importance which the British at that time attached to the step. They knew it was a step fraught with grave consequences. It was difficult, but still they chose to make this Declaration.

It was not given—and I can speak of this with a certain amount of knowledge—it was not given lightly. It was discussed. The actual formula was a matter of very grave consideration by the Cabinet. Although very busy and very worried in time of war, they gave it very considerable time. Lord Milner, Sir Mark Sykes, Mr. Amery, General Smuts, all had a hand in finding the best formula. It was never for a moment lost sight of that it might cause certain difficulties. It is putting it very low if one says that this act, this step, was made or taken by his Majesty's Government in order to secure the sympathies of the rich Jews of America, and England too, during the war. For all I know that may have been a by-product of this Declaration, but it may interest the Commission to realise that the overwhelming majority of the rich Jews, or what are called the rich Jews, were at that time definitely opposed to the Balfour Declaration.

To prove that I may remind you—perhaps it is not generally

known—that in June 1917, a few months before the publication of the Declaration, a letter signed by leading Jews in England who bear venerable names, was published in "The Times," expressing in no uncertain terms their dissatisfaction with any act of this kind. I was away at the time. I had been sent by the Government to Gibraltar on some errand, and at Dover I picked up "The Times" and saw the letter. This letter led to another very long discussion. The Declaration might have been published in the ordinary course of events in June 1917, but the opposition of the leading Jews of England made the Cabinet reconsider the whole problem, and in fact, alter the formula itself; and out of that discussion the formula emerged in its present form. So it cannot by any means be said that it was given lightly; that here was nothing but a piece of war-time propaganda. It was a well-considered act, and I think in conformity with a long tradition, with the semi-romantic, semi-religious desire of the British people to make some contribution towards the solution of a very thorny problem; and it was natural, in the atmosphere which prevailed in 1917, when we all hoped that out of the welter of blood and sorrow a better world would emerge,—a world of peace, happiness and protection even for the weak—that some thought should be given to a people which, though it may have rich representatives, is nevertheless perhaps the weakest among the nations of Europe.

What did the Balfour Declaration mean? It meant something quite simple at that time, and I am saying so advisedly. It meant that Judea was restored to the Jews or the Jews were restored to Judea. I could submit to the Commission a series of utterances of responsible statesmen and men in every walk of life in England to show that this Declaration was at the time regarded as the *Magna Charta* of the Jewish people; it was in a sense comparable with another Declaration made thousands of years before, when Cyrus allowed a remnant of the Jews to return from Babylon and to rebuild the Temple. To the ordinary man at that time reading the Declaration, what it meant is broadly indicated by the various speeches at a solemn meeting at the Opera House in London, where (among others) Lord Cecil spoke and said:—"Arabia for the Arabs, Judea for the Jews, Armenia for the Armenians." Much water and much blood have flowed under the various bridges of the world since that time, and not all of his predictions have been realised; but we read into the Declaration what the statesmen of Great Britain told us it meant. It meant a National Home, "national" meaning that we should be able to live like a nation in Palestine, and "Home" a

place where we might live as free men in contradistinction to living on sufferance everywhere else. To English people I need not explain what the word 'home' means, or what it does *not* mean, to us everywhere else.

The meaning was clear, and the Jewry of the world, in the trenches of Europe, in the pogrom-swept area of Russia, saw it like that. Tens of thousands of Jews marched before the house of the British Consul in Odessa at the time. Behind them were half-organised bands of marauders and murderers sweeping the countryside and destroying everything in their wake. But those Jews poured out their hearts in gratitude to the one accessible representative of the British Government, whom they had never seen, of whom they had never heard, whose language they could not speak, whose mentality they could not understand. They felt that here something had been done for us which, after two thousand years of hope and yearning, would at last give us a resting-place in this terrible world. I can only refer the Commission to the numerous newspaper articles in the British and American press. On the other hand the German Government, when they got to know of it afterwards, were sick at heart that the British had stolen a march on them. They called together our representatives in Germany and tried to explain to them that of course they would have done it, but they could not do it, because they were linked up with Turkey and had to go slowly. Perhaps the German Government considered it a piece of propaganda, but neither the British Government nor the Jews ever conceived of it as such. There was nobody to win over. As I have said, the rich Jews, who could have helped with their influence or money,—to them it meant nothing. The poor Jews had nothing to give.

It meant, as I say, at that time, and speaking in political parlance, a Jewish State; and when I was asked at the Peace Conference, quite impromptu, by Mr. Lansing, 'What do you mean by a Jewish National Home?' I gave this answer: 'To build up something in Palestine which will be as Jewish as England is English.' Of course, we have always borne in mind, and our teachers and mentors at that time, British statesmen, repeatedly told us: 'There is a second half to the Balfour Declaration. That second part provides that nothing should be done which might injure the interests of the non-Jewish communities in Palestine.' Well, I must leave it to the Commission to test this and to ascertain whether, throughout the work of these last sixteen years, we have done anything which has in any way injured the position of the non-

Jewish population. I go further than that. The Balfour Declaration says that the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities should not be interfered with. I would humbly ask the Commission to give the broadest possible interpretation to that, not merely a narrow interpretation of civil and religious rights; put it as broadly as the Commission may wish, and test it, and I think I can say before the Commission, before God, and before the world, that in intention, consciously, nothing has been done to injure their position. On the contrary, indirectly we have conferred benefits on the population of this country. I should like to be perfectly frank: We have not come for that purpose. We have come for the purpose of building up a National Home for the Jewish people; but we are happy and proud that this upbuilding has been accompanied by considerable benefits to the country at large.

A certain time elapsed, My Lord, between the issue of the Declaration and the reign of peace in the world,—a precarious peace—before we were allowed, under the terms of the Declaration, to begin our work; and I should like briefly to describe to the Commission what were the conditions under which we had to begin this kind of work. I think it will be admitted, after the Royal Commission has had an opportunity of surveying what we have done, that for the first time in the history of colonisation work of this kind has been carried out by a private body, a body which had no treasury at its back, no State organisation to aid it, so that we began our work, so to speak, with our right hand tied. Russian Jewry, that Jewry which was the natural carrier of the Zionist ideal and Zionist tradition, was broken, non-existent to all intents and purposes. As I have already mentioned, the rich Jews in the Western communities were, with a few exceptions, either sceptical or opposed. One of the exceptions, whose work you will no doubt have plenty of opportunity of seeing, was Baron Edmond de Rothschild, who began his work in Palestine when it was still under the rule of the Turk. He began his work here roughly sixty years ago. With perhaps the exception of him and a few others—very few—the powerful Jews were either indifferent or against us. In order to get funds for immigration, settlement, acquisition of land, we had to go hat in hand to the Jews of the world, to the poor, and get their contributions.

It is, if I may say so with respect, a fallacy to think that what has been built up in Palestine (with the exception which I have mentioned) has been built up by the rich Jews. When people speak

of Jews, My Lord, they often have in mind the sort of conventional, not to say vulgar, picture of the Jew—powerful, greedy, rapacious, grasping. Here he is, he will throw himself upon a country like a vulture, and will tear it to bits. I have no such opinion even of the rich Jews (I think they are much better than they are made out to be), and certainly not of the poor.

I was instrumental in raising a great part of the public funds which have been sunk in this country. Between 1920 and the present day I have been in America eleven times, once in South Africa, innumerable times in various parts of Europe, and I know my clientèle, so to speak. They are the poor and the lower middle-class; and when I speak of the poor Jew, he is very poor. Only since 1929, since the formation of the extended Jewish Agency, Palestine has become a sort of practical proposition—when people think of practical things nowadays, they do not reckon with imponderables, and do not understand that money is much less than the ideal, the impulse, the self-sacrifice of thousands and thousands who are ready to go to Palestine at the first opportunity—it became a sort of practical proposition, and we began to get the support of the so-called practical men; but at the beginning we had to work in a small country, impoverished, ruined after the War, ruined after four hundreds years of misrule by the Turk. Very often British officials used to look at me, and you could feel they were thinking: Dr. Weizmann is not a bad fellow, but he is running his head against a brick wall; what can he make out of this impoverished, difficult country? In 1930, Lord Passfield, a very practical man, a great economist, said to me, "But Dr. Weizmann, do you not realise there is not room enough to swing a cat in Palestine?" I do not want to be facetious, but many a cat has been swung in Palestine since then, and the population of the country has increased, since that talk of mine with Lord Passfield, by something like 200,000.

Those were the conditions under which we had to start: no treasury, no funds, no experience, no training, a broken-up people; a people which for centuries had been divorced from agricultural pursuits, from what is called, in the English language, pioneering. They were petty traders, middlemen, intellectuals—but we began. After fifteen years we stand before an achievement on which I think one can look with a certain amount of respect, and on which, I will not hide from you, we look with a certain amount of pride.

In the material which has been submitted to you and to which no doubt the Commissions will give careful attention, you will see

our achievements from the concrete facts and figures. I have before me a table, but I do not wish to weary you with its details. The Jewish population of Palestine has increased from something like 55,000 at the end of the War to something (to take the official figures) in the neighbourhood of 400,000—perhaps 375,000, perhaps a little more. I was in Palestine in 1918, while the War was still going on. I had the honour of being attached to Lord Allenby's headquarters, and I saw the sort of Jewish people who were here then—the old people who came to Palestine to pray and to die and to have the privilege of being buried in the Holy Land. These 375,000 are mostly of a different calibre.

We have acquired a certain amount of land. Now a word about that. Our Arab friends always tell us: "Yes, you may not have acquired much but what about the future?" The basis of the National Home to-day is 350,000 acres. In England, in America, in Canada, there are many private estates almost as big as that. The total acquisition of land by the Jews since our early beginnings, during the past sixty years, amounts to something like 1,400,000 dunams. Divide that by four and it will give you the acreage. It is said that all the land which has come into the hands of the Jews is good land, but it is not added that it is good land now, because the sweat and blood of our pioneers has been sunk into it, and a good deal of money. It was not good land at first. It was the land about which the British officials in 1919 had said to me that we would not be able to make anything out of it, and I daresay that if some of them had had a look at the land upon which Tel Aviv and Rishon-le-Zion are built they would have said: "No, it is no good, nobody can settle on that."

We have met with all these difficulties, and I may say that everything which tended toward embarrassing the position of Great Britain in this part of the world has used Zionism and the Jews as a convenient stick with which to beat a dog, and the Jews have lent themselves magnificently to being the stick. Another difficulty which we had to contend with, was that the very causes which might have hastened the issue of the Balfour Declaration also produced resisting forces. One of these forces is the growth of Arab Nationalism. The Arab race emerged out of the War more conscious of itself, and rightly so; and they look upon Palestine as an Arab country and upon us as intruders. This is not the time to discuss it, but by implication, I think, I have answered this particular charge. It may perhaps be interesting to read to you a quotation from a speech by the late Lord Milner in a debate in the House of Lords in 1923:

"If the Arabs go to the length of claiming Palestine as one of their countries in the same sense as Mesopotamia (the name of Mesopotamia was then current) or Arabia proper is an Arab country, then I think they are flying in the face of facts, of all history, of all tradition and all associations of the most important character, I had almost said, the most sacred character. The future of Palestine cannot possibly be left to be determined by the temporary impressions and feelings of the Arab majority in the country at the present day."

I should like to add that as soon as the Balfour Declaration was issued, and even before that, British statesmen and those who had negotiated with British statesmen, were well aware both of Arab susceptibilities and of the necessity for making our position clear to the Arabs. The difficulty with which we were faced, and are unfortunately still faced to-day, is that there were and are very few Arabs who can really speak authoritatively on behalf of the Arab people. In 1918 there was one distinguished Arab who was the commander-in-chief of the Arab armies which were supporting the right flank of Allenby's army, the then Emir Feisal—subsequently King Feisal. At the suggestion of General Allenby, I went to the camp of the Emir. I frankly put to him our aspirations, our hopes, our desires, our intentions, and I can only say—if any oath of mine could convince my Arab opponents—I can only say that we found ourselves in full agreement; and that first meeting was the beginning of a lifelong friendship. Our relationship was expressed subsequently in a treaty—perhaps treaty is too ambitious a word—I was not a contracting party—but in a document whose moral value cannot be contested. It lays down the lines of relationship between the Jews in Palestine and the Arabs in Palestine and their general relationship with the Arabs at large. I may submit to the Commission that, as far as we are concerned, that has not changed.

One feature of this treaty to which I refer is that the intermediary who negotiated it and actually contributed to its drafting was the late Colonel Lawrence. He also acted as interpreter. Of this treaty I gave cognisance to the Foreign Office and to the various authorities who dealt with us at that time.

It may be that we have come to this country as a people which was looked upon primarily as a western people with western training. We have been engaged too much and too deeply with our own work, which has taxed all our energies, and it may be that we have not done all that we could have done in normal circumstances, to

find our way to our Arab friends. History will have to judge of that; but many attempts were made by us, here, in Cairo, in Damascus, in Beirut, to make the Arabs understand our point of view, to ask them to co-operate with us, to help to find a *modus vivendi*. The hand which we repeatedly stretched out was always repelled, and to-day we stand in this position which the Royal Commission faces. Anything which my Organisation or myself or our friends can contribute towards helping the Royal Commission, if they need our help, in finding a solution of this thorny problem, you will find us only too ready to offer.

With that I have finished my introductory remarks, and I shall now turn briefly to the more practical part of our work. The main practical problems which face us concern immigration, land, labour, and the question of self-government. I have tried to point out what was the initial meaning of the Balfour Declaration, and how the Declaration was subsequently interpreted in the various documents which, no doubt, the Commission have studied. On a fair construction of the Declaration, of the Mandate, and of the White Paper of 1922 (which nevertheless embodied a whittling-down of the original mean of the pledge) immigration is to be governed by one principle, the principle of absorptive capacity. It is inconceivable to any Jew that all this could have meant anything less than that Jews should come into Palestine as long as Palestine could absorb them.

The exact measure of absorptive capacity is something which is ascertainable by scientific investigation, which can be made from time to time, but I think, if I may say so, that the country's absorptive capacity is not nearly exhausted. There are two kinds of immigrants in the world, and amongst the Jews, who supply a considerable fraction of the immigrants of the world, I have very clearly distinguished the two kinds: the immigrant who bars the way to the next comer, and the immigrant who paves the way for the next. I have very often seen it happen that people who have migrated, let us say to America or to any other country, are very glad to have found a place for themselves and are not too keen to have other people in the same category follow in their footsteps, because they are always afraid that too great a concentration of a specific category of people may produce certain adverse effects.

In Palestine there is a fundamental difference. The one aim in life of the immigrant who comes here is not only to make himself useful, but to create opportunities for other people to come. I would respectfully submit to the Commission that if they asked any

settler, whether in a village or in a factory, if he was happy or content, in ninety cases out of a hundred they would get an affirmative answer, but the one thing they would ask is: "Will other people come after us?" Not only have the immigrants not been a burden to the community, but they have created opportunities for the absorption of ever more people on a larger scale. I do not say, and I could not prove, that that can go on indefinitely for all time; but, judging by the position as it has developed in the last few years, the possibilities of agriculture, the possibilities of industry, of trade and of commerce, still offer great opportunities for the absorption of the right kind of people, and it is inconceivable that all that the Balfour Declaration meant was that the Jews should be let into Palestine in such numbers as would not cause the Arabs to be outnumbered.

The Jews should be let into Palestine in conformity with the power of absorption of the country, a principle which we accepted fully and genuinely. We accepted the 1922 Paper although it was a disappointment. We accepted it loyally, and we have worked in conformity with it: and there is not one act of ours which runs counter to the policy laid down in that Paper. I am speaking of those who have been officially responsible to His Majesty's Government for the conduct of Zionist affairs and the affairs of the Jewish Agency. Even accepting the absorptive capacity principle—and we have accepted it,—and have every confidence that the Administration will interpret it in a fair manner, even if sometimes the numbers which flow from their interpretation differ from ours—may I call the attention of the Commission to the fact that this principle does not strictly fall within the definition of a "home." A home is a place to which everyone may return freely. England may be over-populated, Belgium may be over-populated; but when a Belgian comes back from exile, he is not asked at the frontier whether he falls within the absorptive capacity of Belgium or not. Still, as I have said, we do not quarrel with it. We have loyally accepted the principle of absorptive capacity, but let the principle be fairly interpreted on economic grounds, always bearing in mind that nothing that we do shall injure the position of the people in this country.

Perhaps I may say a word about the kind of immigrant coming into this country. I would not have wasted the time of the Commission in speaking about it, because I can confidently rely upon the Commission to see for themselves, but I refer to it because, to my shame, I have very often seen it mentioned in the literature of

England (and it is England which matters most), that the Zionists have brought the scum of Europe to Palestine. We have brought, within my own lifetime, something like two generations of young men and women to Palestine. True, many of them were destitute and many of them homeless, coming to make a home in this country, but they have done what you will see they have done. They have done it openly, honestly, modestly, well. If they deserve the definition of scum of Europe, I should like to be counted amongst this scum.

Before I conclude, I should like for one moment to revert again to the Arab problem. Here we are. It is quite true that the Arabs have perhaps not got one hundred per cent. satisfaction out of the War. But, if I understand rightly, what the War settlement considered was the Arab problem as a whole, and not any particular group—this, that, or the other group of Arabs; and the Arab nation emerged out of the War with something like three kingdoms: Hedjaz, Iraq, and Trans-Jordan. Well, it may not be all that human beings could wish for, but who in this world has got the satisfaction of all his wishes? We have this small land to work in—not all of it—and I thought that the old tradition of co-operation between Jews and Arabs which gave a great deal to Europe and enabled these peoples to transmit to Europe in the Dark Ages treasures of science, of art, and philosophy,—I had hoped that this old tradition of co-operation might still prevail, and help us in finding a way out. So far we have not succeeded, but I confess I have not given up hope.

I have mentioned trans-Jordan and I should like to make only one brief reference to it and to preface my remarks by saying that it will not enter my mind to discuss the present political status of Trans-Jordan. No Jew in his senses would now demand any alteration in it; but it should be made clear to the Commission that when this project was adumbrated, when the Balfour Declaration was made, and almost five years subsequently when it began to work, Trans-Jordan was part and parcel of Palestine. For reasons into which I need not enter and which are not my business, it was thought wise to separate them, to truncate Palestine and to separate a country which is larger than Palestine, just as good (or just as bad) climatically ethnically and physically as Palestine, and it is somewhat hard on us that you should turn round and say,—"Palestine is a small country and you are creating a very considerable congestion in the country." I submit to Your Lordship and the Commission that possibilities of further development exist—very con-

siderable possibilities, to my mind. It all depends upon how one views the thing.

I have seen a definition of what is cultivable land,—I do not need to enter into that because I have read that the Commission dealt with it at considerable length yesterday,—but sand dunes to all intents and purposes are uncultivable land. If you cannot dig a well there they are uncultivable; but if you can dig a well, they become cultivable land. Our experts, who will have the honour of tendering evidence before the Commission, are able to point to stretches of land which may still be made available, always without trespassing upon the interests of the population which already exists, for Jewish settlement. The classic case is the Huleh marsh. Here was a marsh which for thousands of years lay idle and was the plague spot of Palestine. It was too big a marsh for such a small country, and it was to all intents and purposes uncultivable. I hope, if in one or two years hence some members of the Commission chance to come to Palestine on an ordinary visit, they may see the change which will have been wrought in that particular part of the country, a lovely part of the country by the way. We hope to create room there for at least two thousand families. We have to go on creating room. It is not like the position in Canada or South Africa, where you have wide spaces. We have to create room, and I think it is perhaps good for us that we have to go on doing it. I think it is feasible and possible, and I shall limit myself only to saying that. I am not an expert on land or colonisation, but facts and figures will be presented to you. I think it all turns on a dynamic policy of development which should be initiated by the Government of Palestine.

I owe the Commission an answer to the question why we have comparatively few settlers on the land. Of the total Jewish population the percentage of settlers on the land, the number of Jews engaged in agricultural occupations, is about 54,900, say roughly, 55,000. The number of Jews engaged in agricultural occupations in our own settlements, settlements which have been created by the Zionist Organisation and the Jewish Agency, is about 4,200 families. The percentage has become smaller in the past few years because the wave of immigration has stopped longer in the towns, and there is a lag between the time when the immigrant arrives and the time when he is drafted off on to the land. Land colonisation is a difficult and slow thing by its very nature. It is an organic growth, so to speak, and it needs a very considerable amount of preparation, both of the human material and of the land; and,

as I said before, it really requires a State organisation in order to do it successfully. We have met with considerable handicaps, and I think unless the Government adopts a dynamic and positive policy in helping to establish close settlement on the land of Palestine (and I am saying this without any desire to criticise the Administration of Palestine), our work of colonisation will naturally be slow.

A word should be said about labour. We have adopted the principle in our work that everything we do we should try to do with our own hands. We think that you possess a thing only when you build it with your own hands, and here was the opportunity in Palestine which had never been offered to us in any other country. Through historical development we went from country to country, and we always happened to come to a country when that country was already built up, and we had, so to speak, to insinuate ourselves into the pores of an organism which had already been created. This also is responsible, to a considerable extent, for the particular relation of non-Jews to Jews. To put it very drastically, we are always being told that we lead a parasitical existence because we come along when everything is ready-made; and here was our opportunity to create everything from the very elements. There was sand and marsh, which we had to convert into cultivable land. There were no houses; we could build them. There were no roads; some of them, at any rate, we could make with our own hands. Therefore we attach the greatest moral value to the principle that the Jew should not come at this particular time into a country where there is a backward population and a reservoir of cheap labour, and assume the rôle of overseer or overlord, leaving the manual work to the Arabs.

I think I may say, Sir, with respect, that all that has been done, which you will see, has been done by the labour of the Jews, and I should like also to reply to a reproach which is very often cast into our faces,—that in the Zionist settlements we do not employ Arab labour. I should like to answer that, first of all, we do not employ any labour at all if we can help it. Ours is mostly self-labour. Very little hired labour is being employed. The settler has a piece of land which he must try to work with his own hands and the hands of his family. If you take Palestine as a whole, there are three distinct sectors of employment: there is the Arab sector, there is the Jewish sector, and there is the Government sector which stands in between. In the Arab sector there is no Jewish labour. In the Government sector a certain amount, and I may gratefully say, an increasing amount of Jewish labour is being employed, but

it still falls short of what is due to us even according to our numbers in this country. I mean to say that in public works organised by the Government, something like thirty per cent. of Jewish labour should be employed. I speak not of our contribution, but merely of our numbers. Our contribution to the income of the country is far above our numbers, but I do not claim that. The amount we get is much lower than that. It is improving, but it is improving after a very considerable struggle. In the Government sector we cannot get employment in accordance with our numerical strength in the country, so that the only sector left to us is our own. This sector can be sub-divided into two parts. As far as private enterprise is concerned, a Jew comes and builds a factory, potash works, or cement works, or a Jew plants an orange grove, and a very considerable amount of Arab labour is being employed in this sub-sector. I think I am right in saying (I stand to be corrected) that, previous to the trouble, in the Jewish groves in the orange belt the number of Arabs employed amounted to six or seven thousand; and that in the cement factory and the potash works, and in some other enterprises, Arabs are employed in considerable numbers. The one sub-sector where Arabs are not employed is in the settlements which we have created since the War; and we find ourselves, I must say this frankly, in something of a difficulty. If we do not employ Arab labour it is thrown in our faces: "You come into the country and you do not employ the labour of the country which is already there." And if we do employ Arab labour, we are likely to lay ourselves open to the reproach (and this reproach is very often mentioned even in the Arab press): "Here they are, they come and live here, and the real work is being done by others, while they are simply overlords." We must do the work of our own upbuilding. I daresay at the present moment these various sectors, particularly the Jewish and the Arab sectors, are somewhat watertight compartments. It depends upon the general political situation which the Commission is about to examine. One day, when the walls between these compartments fall I hope we may be able to find a way by which Arabs may employ Jews in larger numbers, and Jews may employ Arabs in large numbers.

I do not wish to conceal from the Commission that we have a long list of grievances. But these grievances will not be put forward in a spirit of criticism for the sake of criticism of the Government. We know that the Government has done a considerable amount for this country. We know that we are in this country at all because of the British Government and its organs here. In spite of the criticism which you may hear from time to time, I think deep down

in the heart of every Jew there is gratitude that there is at least one nation in the world which has given us the chance to work. But we cannot close our eyes to a great many omissions and to a great many things that could in the spirit of the Mandate have been done for the general benefit, not only of the National Home, but of the country at large. I do not wish to dwell on that now. We have from time to time submitted annual reports to the Mandates Commission, and I shall only refer the Commission to the documents we have presented to them. The last report we submitted to the Mandates Commission gives a more or less exhaustive list of our grievances; but the one great grievance we have is, that so far the Government has not initiated a dynamic, active policy which would tend to improve the main features of the Jewish National Home and of the country at large. And, paradoxical as it may sound—I am not given to paradox, I am a chemist by training—I think the Government has not done enough for the Arabs. It has done a fair amount—and I draw a clear distinction between the last four years and the preceding twelve years. I think a contented Arab population (I do not say you could ever reach an ideal of that kind), a population which could see that something active was being done for them—and something has been done of late—would also mean a considerable amount of security for the National Home.

The Government initiated a project of self-government, the beginnings of self-government in this country. It wished to establish a Legislative Council, but after seeing the form and nature of that Legislative Council, we were reluctantly compelled to refuse it, because we thought it was premature. We thought such a Council would come more naturally after the country had had a more adequate training in municipal self-government; and we thought that, in the form in which self-government was being offered and given, the purpose for which the Arab population (which had previously refused a similar offer) were going to use it, the Council would simply mean the creation of another obstacle in the way of the National Home. But I should like to add that there may be forms, and there may be conditions, and I hope it will be given to this Royal Commission to formulate such conditions and such forms—I know it is asking a great deal—under which self-governing institutions, and particularly a Legislative Council, could be initiated with our consent, and I hope with the consent of the population of the country. The task of the Royal Commission is complex, and it has come at a time when the Jewish position is darker than ever before, even in our history. I pray that it may be given to you to find a way out.

APPENDIX.

SETTLEMENT OF JEWISH REFUGEES.

THE ZIONIST CLAIM

PROVED AND UNCERTAIN EXPERIMENTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—A wealth of suggestions is being put forward for dealing with the problem of Jewish refugees; and when more than 500,000 have to be evacuated from Greater Germany, with further millions from Eastern Europe in the offing, no responsible person will lightly reject any suggestion which offers even the remotest chance of salvation for these people. But it would be equally wrong to treat every plausible suggestion as a certainty on which to base their life and fate.

Broadly speaking, immigration takes the form either of infiltration into organized, fully developed communities, such as Great Britain or the U.S.A., or of new settlement to be undertaken in undeveloped, or under-developed, territories, say, British Guiana or Alaska. There are few technical difficulties in the way of infiltration within certain numerical limits; within those limits, the problem is not whether immigration is feasible, but whether it is desired or admitted. In undeveloped countries, even where the possibility of development has been proved, the question remains whether the people whom it is proposed to settle are fit, or can be fitted, for the task; for it is one thing to succeed in farming in the country of one's birth, which numerous Jews have done, but quite another to attempt it in exotic surroundings and not from choice. Only after the initial experiments, which are invariably lengthy and costly, often involving large expenditure *a fonds perdu*, have proved successful can large-scale settlement be attempted.

The experiment of Jewish settlement in Palestine was seriously started about 60 years ago. It was almost 40 years old at the time of the Balfour Declaration. It became an acknowledged success and basis for mass-immigration within the last 10 years. Even if Jews could ultimately be settled in other countries with the same success, such countries cannot satisfy the dire and immediate need of the German Jews.

But the idea of settling Jews on the land in countries other than Palestine is not a new one. It has been tried time and again, and the results of these experiments must be studied before any new venture in this field is embarked upon. In the Argentine vast sums were sunk by the late Baron Hirsch in a Jewish colonization scheme which had at its disposal extensive areas of excellent land. To-day those colonies are in a state of decline, and among the younger generation there is a growing "back-to-town" movement. The pitiable results of another similar venture, sponsored by the Soviet Government in Biro-bidjan, were reported by your Correspondent only a few days ago.

The success of the Jews in Palestine, as against failures elsewhere, is not due to any superiority of the methods of settlement adopted in that country, as has been suggested by certain references in the Press. This explanation of the difference still begs the question: Why is it that the same race of people which has made a success of one country has failed in others?

The real reason is that no other country can offer to the Jews the chances of success inherent in a return to a homeland. British manual workers and ex-soldiers seemed, on the face of it, much more promising material for agricultural settlers than Jewish professional men, traders, or small artisans, divorced from the soil for almost 2,000 years; yet many post-War attempts at British settlement of adults overseas have failed. There was no national or religious fervour behind them to overcome the formidable difficulties which face the town-dweller on the land in a new and undeveloped country. Jewish settlement in Palestine has succeeded because every furrow ploughed, every tree planted, is sanctified into an act of national redemption. It is because he is conscious of "belonging" to the soil of Palestine, as to that of no other country, that the Jewish settler has clung to his land there with such tenacity.

To sum up. The need is such that every possible relief should be provided. But are the Jews to be kept out of the one land of their acknowledged right, where, with adequate means, 100,000 could be settled immediately (and ultimately many more) on an economically well-established basis, or must they risk all that remains of their resources upon uncertain experiments, incapable of giving immediate relief, and unsupported by a national idea?

Yours obediently,

CH. WEIZMANN.

The Jewish Agency for Palestine,
77, Great Russell Street, W.C.1,
Jan. 18th.

Reprinted from "The Times," Monday, January 23rd, 1939.

Quarries Co.
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הסוכנות היהודית בשביל ארץ ישראל
THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE.

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 3817 (4 LINES).

TELEGRAMS: "ZIONIBURO, LONDON."

CODES: BENTLEY'S AND MOSSE'S.

77, GREAT RUSSELL STREET,

LONDON, W.C.1.

In reply please address the Secretary:

and quote the following Reference No.:

77 February, 1939.

193

There will be a meeting of the
PALESTINE DISCUSSIONS CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
on the 9th Feb. at 10.30 am. in the Con-
ference Room, 77, Great Russell Street,
W.C. 1.

Dr. I. Herzog.

Palestine Royal Commission.

*All communications to be addressed to
the Secretary.*

In your reply please quote:

Re/103

Telephone No. 1337

*Office of the
Palestine Royal Commission,
P. O. B. 487
Jerusalem,
Palestine.*

19th January, 1937.

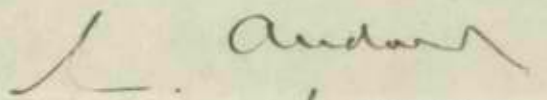
The Private Secretary,
Chief Rabbi Dr. I. Herzog,
Hotel Amrusky,
Jerusalem.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the
18th January, I regret that it is not now possible
to arrange even a conversation between Chief Rabbi
Herzog and the Members of the Royal Commission.
The Chairman and Vice Chairman left Palestine today
and the other members will leave either tomorrow or
in the course of the next few days.

Lord Peel was extremely sorry that there was
no opportunity of meeting the new Chief Rabbi.

Yours faithfully,


+ SECRETARY,
PALESTINE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Palestine Partition Commission.

*All communications to be addressed to
the Secretary.*

In your reply please quote:

P17/19/38.

Telephone No. 1919.

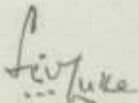
*Office of the
Palestine Partition Commission,
P. O. B. 104,
Jerusalem,
Palestine.*

23rd May, 1938.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Chairman to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th May, and to inform you that he will be grateful if His Eminence, the Chief Rabbi, would furnish the Commission in the first instance with a written statement of the views which he proposes to submit for their consideration. A further communication will then be addressed to you regarding the date on which the Commission will arrange to receive Dr. Herzog.

Yours faithfully,


Secretary.

JACOB GOLDMAN, ESQ.

Palestine Partition Commission.

*All communications to be addressed to
the Secretary.*

In your reply please quote:

P17/19/38.

Telephone No. 1919.

*Office of the
Palestine Partition Commission,
P. O. B. 104,
Jerusalem,
Palestine.*

2986

30th May, 1938.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Chairman to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th May, and to inform you that no date has been arranged before which memoranda must be submitted to the Commission. It would, however, be a great convenience to the Commission if His Eminence the Chief Rabbi could submit his memorandum as soon as he can conveniently arrange to do so.

As regards the second point raised in your letter, I am to say that the question of the future constitution of the Jewish State in the event of partition is a matter falling within the Commission's terms of reference.

Yours faithfully,

L. J. Luke

Secretary.

July 7, 1938.

The Secretary,
Palestine Partition Commission,
Jerusalem.

Dear Mr. Luke,

Further to our evidence this morning we have to say that we had expected some questions on the Agudath Israel.

As no reference to the point was made by the Commission we could not of course refer to it. For your information, however, we are forwarding herewith the enclosed copy of a Memorandum submitted on April 9, 1933 to the League of Nations through H. E. the High Commissioner.

There are a few details in that document which no longer apply but in the whole it constitutes an accurate presentation of the facts as they are now.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary

was not sent

933

30th August, 1938.

The Secretary,
Palestine Partition Commission,
55, Broadway,
N.W.1.

Sir,

On behalf of the Executive of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, I have the honour to refer to your letter of June 28th on the subject of certain suggestions put forward by the Agudat Israel, on which the Executive desire to offer the following observations:

- (i) The Jewish Agency does not regard the suggestions of the Agudat Israel as falling within the scope of "minority" questions as dealt with in its memorandum of July 21st, 1938.
- (ii) The organic law or constitution of the Jewish State will be framed by the competent constituent body of that State in accordance with its own needs and views.
- (iii) The Agudat Israel is an organisation forming part of the Jewish community in Palestine, and like all other Jewish bodies and organisations, it will naturally have full opportunity to express its view on, and to exercise its influence in, the framing of the constitution of the proposed Jewish State.

...2...

(iv) That constitution will ensure to every citizen and resident of the State, and to every group of citizens or residents, complete freedom of conscience and free exercise of religion, subject only to the maintenance of public order.

(v) The Jewish Sabbath and the Jewish Holy Days will be recognised as the official days of rest in the Jewish State. Non-Jews will be free to observe their own holidays instead of the Jewish holidays if they wish.

(vi) Every Jewish (or non-Jewish) group will be assured of complete freedom to regulate and control its religious affairs in accordance with its own views and beliefs, within the framework of the constitution, and will be protected against any form of coercion in matters of faith or conscience.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Signed....A. LOURIE.

P17/19/38.

PALESTINE PARTITION COMMISSION,

55, Broadway,

LONDON, S.W.1.

6th September, 1938.

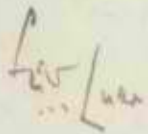
Your Eminence,

I am directed by the Chairman to acknowledge the receipt of Your Eminence's telegram of the 2nd September, and to confirm my telegram of the 3rd September, which reads as follows -

Commission will receive delegation at 11 a.m. on Tuesday 13th September at their offices at 55 Broadway.

I am,

Your Eminence's most obedient,
humble servant,


SECRETARY.

HIS EMINENCE

THE CHIEF RABBI OF THE HOLY LAND.

P22/28/38.

PALESTINE PARTITION COMMISSION,

55, Broadway,

LONDON, S. W. 1.

6th October, 1938.

Dear Dr Herzog

Thank you for your letter of the 25th September and for your suggestions of corrections to be made in the verbatim report of your evidence submitted to the Commission on the 13th September.

The Commission have required all witnesses who have given evidence at private sessions to return the verbatim records sent to them for correction, and I should therefore be grateful if you could now let me have the records both of the meeting on the 13th September and that on the 7th July; the latter was sent to you for correction with my letter of the 22nd July.

Yours sincerely

David Lloyd

DR. ISAAC HERZOG.